(b) UNICEF in India in partnership with other UN Agencies and NGOs, is implementing psycho-social interventions for children who have undergone trauma through teachers and community volunteers. These teachers and community volunteers have been trained in skills to conduct simple and interactive activities which will help children in school as well as out of school to deal with the trauma. The volunteers will also identify children who seem to be at risk of developing long term psychological problems. The identified children will be referred to mental health professionals in the districts.

(c) The Government has supported the interventions being made by UNICEF to help Tsunami victims.

Compensation for Tsunami affected students

†2058. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take special steps to compensate the interruption caused in the studies of the children in Tsunami affected areas;

(b) whether he is having information about the damage to the schools;

(c) if so, the action taken in this regard; and

(d) whether any assessment has been made about the number of students affected by Tsunami?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Information on the damage to schools/colleges of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Pondicherry etc. and assessment of damage to these schools have been furnished to the Ministry of Home Affairs for appropriate action.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Suicide due to ragging

2059. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that junior students in colleges are committing suicide due to ragging by senior students; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/to be taken by Government to prevent such suicides in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) No such case has currently come to the notice of the Central Government.

(b) The Government has taken note of the problem of ragging in Universities/Colleges. In order to explore the measures for curbing of ragging in Universities and Colleges, the UGC constituted an expert committee in September, 1999. The report of the expert committee was circulated to all universities for necessary action. The directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Civil Petition No. 656 of 1998 on curbing the menace of ragging in the educational institutions have also been circulated to all the State/UT Governments/universities for their strict compliance. The Commission has also invited the attention of the universities to the report of the committee constituted by I.I.T., Delhi on measures to curb ragging. AICTE has also issued instructions to all the State Secretaries (Technical Education) and Vice-Chancellors of Technical Universities for taking necessary steps to prevent ragging in the Institutes.

Elimination of gender disparity

2060. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UNESCO, among other nations, has called upon India to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether UNESCO proposes to extend financial help for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) and (b) The UNESCO conference of the World Education Forum held at Dakar in April, 2000, in which 164 countries, including India, participated and adopted, a Framework